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ABSTRACT

This study examined higher education institutions' compliance with Standard IIB, Criterion #35 of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which focuses on arrangements the teacher education program has made with school districts to provide assistance to its graduates who are first year teachers. Data were obtained from reports prepared for accreditation reviews at 87 institutions. Fifty-eight of the institutions met Standard IIB with no weaknesses in criterion #35. Nineteen institutions met the standard, but with weakness cited in criterion #35. Ten institutions did not pass the standard; seven of these were cited for weakness in criterion #35. Forms of support for beginning educators included faculty conferring with graduates informally, formal mentors from colleges or universities working with beginning teachers, and formal mentors provided by school districts. Institutions that provided support only on an informal, unstructured basis or who sent letters to districts or graduates offering help were not assessed to have met criterion #35. Comparison with results of a 1987 study indicates that many NCATE institutions are taking an active role in teacher induction. The paper concludes that the socialization of beginning educators needs to reinforce teacher education program outcomes--and those outcomes need to be continually examined within the crucible of practice. (Contains 12 references.) (JDD)

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A STUDY OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF NCATE INSTITUTIONS IN THE SUPPORT OF BEGINNING TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT:

In 1988, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) revised its standards to include Standard IIB:, relationships with graduates, and Criterion #35, that specifically mentions institutions' responsibility to form a plan that provides support for beginning teachers in cooperation with preK-12 schools.

The involvement of higher education institutions in teacher induction was examined by reviewing institutional reports and Board of Examiners summaries prepared for NCATE accreditation reviews. The sample consisted of institutions that had completed NCATE reports processed during 1991 and 1992, the two most recent years for which materials could be obtained. Rejoinders were considered only if they were part of a composite NCATE report. For purposes of this study, only institutional responses to Standard IIB, criterion #35, were assessed in order to seek responses to these questions:

1) What is the status of institutional compliance with Standard IIB:35?

2) How do components of reported plans for beginning teacher assistance coincide with the five goals of teacher induction established in professional literature?

3) What components are included in successful programs?

4) Is support given to other beginning professional educators as well as to teachers?

PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES:

1) Present findings in terms of categories for compliance/non-compliance with Standard IIB:35.

2) Discuss most often cited weaknesses

3) Profile components of support systems in place

4) Apply findings to higher education's role in induction for professional educators.

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NCATE IIB:35
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A Study of the Involvement of NCATE Institutions in the Support of Beginning Teachers

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Support for beginning teachers in the form of induction programs became a popular reform initiative in the past decade. Today, 45 states and the District of Columbia report some form of state initiative, pilot program, or mandate associated with beginning teacher induction (Sclan & Darling-Hammond, 1992). The movement to establish induction programs has been carried on mainly under the direction of the states, with the responsibility for providing such programs residing with the local school districts. Higher education's role in the enactment of beginning teacher induction has not been well-defined.

A few notable exceptions do exist, among them the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater program, initiated in 1974--and the Albuquerque-University of New Mexico Teacher Induction Program (Huling-Austin et. al 1989). Both have provided models for the country. The North Carolina Initial Induction Program also included the possibility of a higher education representative as a member of the support team to provide beginning teacher assistance (and assessment) (Huling-Austin et. al 1989). However, historically, there has been little formal contact between beginning teachers and the institution at which they received their pre-service preparation (Howsam, Corrigan, Denemark & Nash, 1976). In the Association of

Teacher Educators' 1987 monograph, Teacher Induction-A New Beginning, Johnston and Kay remarked that schools and institutions of higher education share an important responsibility for the professional induction of beginning teachers. Despite this, little attention has been focused on the involvement of higher education.

Johnston and Kay's 1987 survey of 300 AACTE member institutions revealed that only half of the colleges and universities surveyed were implementing or planning teacher induction activities. Those activities generally involved higher education professionals acting as consultants on professional development activities for beginning teachers. It appeared, at that time, that institutions usually engaged in teacher induction through formal agreements with local school districts in response to state mandate. The ethos that teacher education institutions had a responsibility to their graduates was not widely apparent independent of state mandates.

The year after the Johnston and Kay study, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)(1988) revised its standards and included Standard IIB and criterion #35. Standard IIB addresses the overall relationships and follow-up pertaining to graduates from units' professional education programs. Criterion #35 focuses upon whether or not, "the unit has developed arrangements with school districts in the area to provide assistance to its graduates who are first year teachers and/or who are beginning other professional education roles as an extension of their professional education program" (NCATE, 1990, p.50). Since NCATE has

a standard and criterion to which all participating NCATE institutions must respond, that specifically address beginning teacher support, the information drawn from reports of this sample of NCATE institutions provides insight on the involvement of institutions of higher education in beginning teacher support.

This study continues to examine higher education institutions' involvement in induction by addressing the questions:

1) What is the status of institutional compliance with NCATE's Standard IIB:35 that requires a plan for induction support with schools?
2) How do components of reported plans for beginning teacher assistance coincide with the five goals of teacher induction identified in professional literature?
3) What components are included in successful programs?
4) Is support given to other beginning professional educators as well as to teachers?
5) Are teacher education institutions assuming more professional development responsibilities with their graduates than was reported in the Johnston and Kay study in 1987?

Theoretical Framework

The assumptions underlying this study are that the first years of teaching or professional involvement are unique years in the development of teachers and other school personnel including administrators. Beginning education professionals need to be guided

and supported because teaching behaviors and attitudes are formed during the induction period that will influence these professionals throughout the duration of their careers (Fagan, Dunleavy, & Ferguson et. al, 1983; Huling-Austin, 1990; Lortie, 1975; Mosrie, 1986). Because of the important nature of the transition period from pre-service student status to that of experienced, mature professionals, beginning teacher and administrators need well-planned and carefully implemented induction programs.

Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to be involved with their graduates so that they can provide assistance during this transition period and be kept informed of their graduates' needs. Information received on needs of beginning teachers is important to colleges and universities as they engage in the continual process of curricular change in teacher education programs.

METHODOLOGY

The involvement of higher education institutions in teacher induction was examined by reviewing institutional reports and Board of Examiners' summary reports prepared for NCATE accreditation reviews. The sample studied consisted of institutions of higher education that had completed NCATE reports processed during 1991 and 1992, the two most recent years for which materials could be obtained. Rejoinders were considered only if they were part of a composite NCATE report. For purposes of this study, only the institutional responses to Standard IIB, criterion #35, were

examined.

Information from institutional reports was recorded on a survey form developed by the researchers to assist them in processing resulting data. Survey items included full-time enrollment figures, levels of programs offered, status of Standard IIB and criterion #35 compliance, reasons stated for non-compliance among institutions that were determined not to have met Standard IIB:35, the status of beginning teacher assistance at the state level--mandated or not mandated, state-mandated, stated purpose of beginning teacher induction, components included in the assistance plan, and additional support available to beginning teachers or other professionals. Data analysis procedures were performed with the assistance of SPSS computer software, version 4.1. Following descriptive analysis of the resulting data, a series of crosstabulation measures were performed to ascertain the association of the dependent variable, degrees of compliance or non-compliance with Standard IIB:35, with the independent variables comprising the remainder of the survey. Observed frequency versus expected frequency chi-square analysis of the data was performed to determine statistical significance of resulting values.

FINDINGS

Of the 87 institutions meeting criteria for inclusion in the sample, 49 were public and 38 private. The institutions' undergraduate teacher education programs varied in size, with 20

institutions (23%) under 100 students, 34 (39%) between 100 and 500 students, 15 (17.2%) with 500 to 1,000, and 12 (13.8%) with over 1,000 teacher education students. Six institutions had no enrollment data included in the report materials to which the researchers had access. Despite the wide range of institutional enrollment sizes and representation from public and private institutions, no statistically significant differences were noted for the association of size or public/private affiliation of teacher education programs and compliance with Standard IIB:35.

All but two institutions offered baccalaureate programs. (At some institutions, a master's degree in teaching is required for initial teacher certification.) Forty-nine schools with graduate programs sought accreditation at the advanced level.

Institutional Compliance with Standard IIB:35

Meeting Standard IIB with no weaknesses cited was accomplished by 52 (59.8%) of the 87 institutions in the sample. Nineteen institutions (21.8%) met the standard, but with weakness cited in criterion #35. Six (6.9%) passed the standard with weakness in an area other than #35. (Institutions can meet a standard but still be cited for weakness discovered in one or more of the criteria referenced to the standard.) Ten institutions (11.4%) did not pass the standard; seven of these ten were cited for weakness in criterion #35.

In the advanced graduate level, for the 49 institutions reporting an advanced program, Board of Examiners' reports for

advanced programs differed from those of their basic findings in only one case. In all other cases, if weakness was cited for IIB:35 at the basic level it was also cited at the advanced level. In like manner, if an institution was successful in passing a standard or criterion at the basic level, it passed at the advanced level.

Institutions' Plans and the Five Goals of Teacher Induction

Huling-Austin (1989) pointed out five broad goals of induction programs: Orientation--to transmit the culture of the system; psychological and social support--to promote the personal and professional well-being of beginning teachers; improvement of teaching skills; retention; evaluation--to satisfy mandated requirements related to induction. In this study, the stated purpose of reporting institutions' plans to assist beginning educators was that of providing support. Fifty-nine (67.8%) of the institutions mentioned support in a general way but all of these neglected to identify support goals as enumerated by Huling-Austin. In contrast, at least one of the five broad goals was identified as a purpose of beginning professional assistance by eight (9.2%) of the institutions.

Components of Successful Induction Programs

Of the 52 institutions who passed Standard IIB with no weaknesses, 32 stated that college/university faculty members conferred informally with graduates while 10 had faculty members engage in formal, on-site visits. Fourteen institutions offered one or two workshops during the year and 13 had formal mentors assigned

by their school districts. Only eight provided formal mentors for beginning teachers from the institutions: these institutions were located in states that mandated higher educators' involvement on beginning teacher assistance teams, commonly comprised of a mentor teacher, an administrator and a representative form the college or university. In addition, 11 provided an 800 number to assist in communication. All of the above components, with the exception of component offering one or two workshops, were found to be associated with passing Standard IIB:35 at a statistically significant level. Components associated at the .01 level of significance were: 1) faculty conferring with graduates on an informal basis, 2) formal mentors from colleges or universities working with beginning teachers, and 3) formal mentors provided by the school districts in which beginners work. Faculty conferring with graduates on a formal basis and having an 800 number to facilitate communication were significantly associated at the .05 level.

Of the institutions passing Standard IIB:35 with no weaknesses, 30 identified at least three different components in their assistance plans. Some plans included up to six components. It was also of interest that five institutions were confident enough in their graduates to give warranties to schools hiring their graduates. These warranties stated that supportive or remedial assistance would be provided free of charge upon request by the schools or school districts.

Additional components reported less frequently and

consequently not found to be statistically significant in association with passing Standard IIB:35 can be categorized as either: 1) on-site assistance, 2) communication connections, 3) professional development opportunities for experienced educators and for beginning educators. Four of the institutions reported that their pre-existing networks of field supervisors or regional extension personnel provided on-site support. Three institutions placed preservice field experience students with beginning teachers to assist with clerical tasks.

Communication connections between beginning teachers and their campuses was facilitated in a number of ways. The four methods cited were: 1) establishing a computer field network, 2) conducting teleconferences, 3) providing access to faculty and resource personnel via FAX, and 4) telephoning with beginning teachers.

Professional development opportunities offered to those who work with beginning teachers included coordinating school-based mentors, conducting related staff development seminars, and offering a Teacher Support Specialist endorsement. Other activities listed to assist the professional development of first year teachers helping graduates form an individual professional development plan, sharing resource materials, journaling with beginning teachers, or developing a handbook for beginning teachers.

Other components reported by a small number of institutions as part of their plan included the following: 1) letters to districts offering assistance if the districts so desired, 2) letters to

graduates offering assistance, 3) consultants provided to schools upon request, 4) interviews with school administrators to check on progress of beginning teachers, 5) letters sent directly to graduates offering assistance and 6) workshops for beginning teachers in conjunction with other professionals. All of these responses that were coded in the "other" category on question 12 of research survey instrument, if presented as the only component in an institutional plan, were rejected by the NCATE Teams as insufficient for meeting IIB:35. Each of these components had to be a part of a more comprehensive plan. None separately were statistically significant in regard to their association with passing Standard IIB:35. The preceding list, plus the previously mentioned components of beginning teacher support plans, offers many ideas for ways that teacher education institutions can be actively involved with their beginning teachers. The components varied but, as previously stated, the most frequently mentioned component was that of faculty members conferring informally with graduates.

There were 42 institutions that reported faculty members conferred informally with graduates. Of the 42, 4 offered this interaction as their sole component of beginning teacher assistance. Informal conferencing alone, however, was accepted by the NCATE Examiner's Team as sufficient activity to meet the Standard and criterion #35 in only 2 cases. In two cases where the same response was offered, the Board of Examiners declared that the standard was met but with weakness cited in criterion #35.

Another inconsistency in team findings was noted in the instance of two institutions that presented as their sole plan the component of a series of workshops given throughout the year. One was cited for weakness in criterion #35 while the other institution was not cited for weakness in that area, even though it had given the same response. A total of ten cases of inconsistent findings was noted among Board of Examiners' team findings, concerning whether or not individual support plans were judged sufficient for meeting Standard IIB:35. This means that ten institutions were cited for weakness in this area while other schools were not cited for weakness although the same components were offered as evidence that the standard and criterion had been met.

The researchers recognize that additional information not contained in the institutional reports may have been made available to or uncovered by Board of Examiners' teams during subsequent analysis that led to their decisions. Examining Board of Examiners' team reports for inconsistencies was not one of the stated purposes of this study. However, finding inconsistencies between 10 (11.49%) reports and the remaining 77 (88.51%) out of the total 87 institutional reports, on Standard IIB:35 alone, could not be overlooked.

Support for Other Beginning Educators

Nine institutions indicated that assistance was being offered

for other beginning education professionals. Eight of these nine institutions provided assistance for beginning school administrators. One institution mentioned providing assistance for speech pathologists. The institutional reports of the remaining schools had no indication of support for other beginning professionals in education. At first glance, this information brings into question the findings by Board of Examiners' teams citing only 12 of the 49 institutions with advanced programs for not successfully meeting criterion #35 at the advanced level. Once again, studying the types of advanced programs offered by these 49 institutions was not a goal of this study. It is quite possible that many advanced programs were in areas that permitted educators to remain in teaching.

Institutional Involvement in Assistance: 1987 and 1994

In this study of 87 institutions seeking NCATE accreditation, 52 (59.8%) met requirements with no weaknesses cited for basic accreditation in Standard IIB:35, which focuses on institution-graduate relationships. Six schools (6.9%) met Standard IIB, but had weaknesses cited for Standard IIB in criteria #33 or #34: not in criterion #35. Three schools (3.45%) did not meet Standard IIB, but for weaknesses cited in criteria #33 or #34: not in criteria #35. Consequently, beginning teacher assistance programs at a total of 61 institutions (70.2%) had no weaknesses cited in criterion #35.

Of the remaining schools, 19 (21.8%) met Standard IIB with weakness being cited in criterion #35. In these cases, the

induction support which had been implemented was judged to be in need of further development but concerns raised were not severe enough to jeopardize their passing Standard IIB. An additional seven (8.05%) institutions did not pass Standard IIB at all because of weaknesses relating totally or in part to criterion #35. Where this was the case, beginning teacher support was found to be non-existent, or in the planning stages, or unable to be verified by on-site teams.

Therefore, 70.2% of the schools seeking NCATE accreditation between 1991 and 1992 had implemented beginning teacher assistance plans in which Board of Examiners' teams found no weaknesses related to criterion #35. An additional 21.8% of the sample had plans for beginning teacher assistance that were indeed implemented but were judged to be in need of additional development: Standard IIB was met, but with weakness cited in criterion #35. Finally, 8% had not met Standard IIB and had weakness in criterion #35.

While approximately 50% of the institutions surveyed by Johnston and Kay (1989) self-reported that they had support programs in the implementation or planning stages, 70% of the institution seeking NCATE accreditation in 1991-92 had implemented programs of beginning teacher assistants and were assessed as having met criterion #35 requiring plans for assistance of graduates. Since the Johnston and Kay report did not gather data on NCATE institutions, the two studies can not be compared. However, the fact that 70% of NCATE institutions had a plan in place that was considered satisfactory by the Board of Examiners Team does show the influence NCATE has had on

increasing induction support plans among its members.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In summary, 61 (70.2%) of the 87 NCATE institutions seeking basic NCATE accreditation during 1991 and 1992 met with no weakness cited the requirement of criterion #35 which recommends the institutional support to graduates of education units during their first year in the education workforce. Fifty-two (59.8%) of the total 87 schools met Standard IIB completely, six (6.9%) met Standard IIB:35 but had weaknesses cited in criterion #33 or #34, not in #35. An additional 19 (21.8%) met Standard IIB, but with weakness cited in criterion #35. Finally, ten (11.5%) institutions did not pass Standard IIB at all. Seven of the 10 (8%) had weaknesses relating totally or in part to criterion #35.

Huling-Austin (1989) pointed out five broad goals of induction programs: orientation, psychological support, refinement of teaching skills, retention, and evaluation. The major goal of assistance for 59 (67.8%) of the NCATE institutions in this sample was to provide support for beginning educators. The most frequently mentioned forms of support included faculty conferring with graduates on an informal basis, formal mentors from colleges or universities working with beginning teachers, and formal mentors provided by the school districts in which beginners work (all three components associated with this sample meeting Standard IIB:35 with no weaknesses at the .01 level of significance). Institutions also mentioned faculty

members conferring with graduates on a formal basis, having an 800 number to facilitate communication (both associated with meeting Standard IIB:35 with no weaknesses at the .05 level of significance), and holding workshops for beginning teachers. Institutions that provided support only on an informal, unstructured basis or who sent letters to districts or graduates offering help if needed were not assessed to have met criterion #35.

At the advanced level, only nine institutions gave assistance to other beginning educational professionals other than teachers. Eight institutions (9.2%) provided assistance for beginning school administrators and one institution provided assistance for speech pathologists. Findings of the Board of Examiners' teams when assessing compliance with Standard IIB:35 at the advanced level paralleled team findings at the basic level. For the 49 institutions in this sample that sought advanced accreditation, findings at the basic and advanced levels differed in only one case.

In regard to active involvement of college/university teacher education units with beginning teacher assistance, results of this study were quite different from those of the Johnston and Kay study in 1987. Sixty-one (70%) of the 87 institutions reviewed by NCATE Board of Examiners' teams in 1991 and 1992 passed criterion #35 and were recognized by NCATE for having implemented programs of beginning teacher assistance. Using the 1987 Johnston and Kay study as a bench mark in which approximately 50% of the institutions surveyed had beginning teacher assistance programs in the

implementation or planning stages, it is apparent that many NCATE colleges and universities are taking an active role in the teacher induction process.

Discussion

Why should we in teacher education be concerned about higher education's lack of involvement with beginning teachers if schools are providing that needed support? Teacher education's involvement with beginning teachers provides that link between preservice and in-service that enables higher education to help influence the socialization of the beginner into the profession. The teacher education model that shaped the beginner can be reinforced at a time when the beginner is most vulnerable to reshaping in order to "survive." Sandefur (1982) pointed out that beginning teachers often revert from a progressive teaching style practical in preservice training to a traditional style if they are not provided assistance.

Implications

That approximately 30% of the institutions reporting were cited as having a weakness in their plan for supporting their graduates who were in the first year of teaching does show that a sizable group of institutions who were required to have a plan did not consider induction support a priority. It is obvious though that NCATE's criterion on assistance for beginning educational professionals has put pressure on institutions to establish a plan that formalized their involvement with schools concerning induction support. Formalized agreements bring pressure to bear on the IHEs to commit

resources of faculty time, financial and administrative support. Without that support, the teacher education faculty cannot be involved because the time invested could be detrimental to their academic advancement. Unfortunately, teacher education's involvement in the schools continues to receive little attention as evidence of faculty productivity for promotion and tenure purposes.

Formalized plans indicate to schools a commitment to work together on the development of beginning teaching. The importance Colleges of Education attribute to support for beginning teachers probably influences their commitment to formalize and deliver such support.

Working with beginning teachers also provides immediate feedback to the institution on the strengths & weaknesses of the teacher education program. Such information has curricular change implications. Being able to hear directly from teachers in the classroom--particularly from those in the field with three to five years of service--gives teacher educators vital information on what is happening in schools and how the beginning teachers are able to use the skills & knowledge learned in their preservice program.

Another area worthy of discussion is that of assistance activities and the wide range of components from formal IHE mentors to computer linkages. An observation that can be made concerning the types of assistance is that higher education institutions appear to be more willing to provide services that can be delivered on-campus rather than in the schools. Activities with

groups of beginning teachers are favored. There was minimal indication of courses and workshop for beginning teacher being offered cooperatively with both the schools and the IHEs involved. The involvement of higher education faculty as mentors also is not widely practiced except on those states mandating such involvement. The limitations of proximity, differing cultures, do not encourage higher education faculty to be involved as mentors on a one-to-one basis unless through the phone or computer. Rather, higher education's role can be to provide a secondary support system that reinforces the undergraduate program and helps new teachers grow through the turbulent first year by offering informed support through communication networks, group instruction through courses and workshops, and training for local school personnel who serve as mentors.

Since only nine (18%) of the 49 institutions who offered advanced level programs mentioned providing induction support. The belief that all school personnel in a new role need support is not prevalent in practice today. Teacher education institutions need to extend assistance to beginning administrators, counselors, etc. who also encounter similar stresses as those of beginning teachers (Rogers & Dray 1988). The assistance may take a similar form to that provided for teachers but may not involve as long a time frame for continued support. However, all professionals in new roles can benefit from such assistance.

In summary, this examination shows that the role teacher

education institutions play in supporting beginning teachers is a secondary role with the schools assuming the major responsibility. As long as teacher education institutions do not relinquish their responsibility to their graduates and involvement in the in-servicing of all teachers, the secondary role is not troublesome. However, with more and more schools conducting their own in-services or employing private enterprise agencies, higher education is being relegated the delivering of academic degrees that may or may not impact the professional development of educators. In some states such as Iowa where less than 30% of the teachers obtain master degrees, the influence of higher education at the in-service level is minimal. Therefore, the induction period that is a critical time in a educator's development needs to be supported cooperatively by both the school and the teacher education institution. The socialization of the professional educator needs to include the reinforcement of the teacher education program outcomes--and those outcomes need to be continually examined within the crucible of practice. Teacher education with or without NCATE requirements needs to be a cooperative venture with the schools and the community from preservice through induction and in-service. If teacher education in higher education has a raison d'etre we must be involved in the larger arena every step of the way.

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